

# **KEY MESSAGES**

## **Recipe for Successful Communication**

### **of Changes in Montana School Lunches for the 2012-13 School Year**

#### **OVERALL STRATEGIES:**

- 1. Be POSITIVE.**
  - Share the good news about your program.
- 2. Keep it SIMPLE.**
  - Have a main message and use 2-3 supporting points.
- 3. Tell them what's in it for THEM.**
  - Use different messages for different audiences.

#### **Why are changes coming to our school lunches?**

##### **USDA has developed new meal patterns for the health of all children.**

- Like the MyPlate icon for families, these changes are based on the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- They are designed to comply with new nutrition standards mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.
- They will help children maintain a healthy weight and get enough of the nutrients that they are missing, like calcium, vitamin D, potassium, and fiber.

##### **The new meal patterns continue ongoing improvements in schools.**

- Montana schools have been making numerous healthful changes to school meals and winning national awards over the past 5 years.
- We have added more fruit, vegetables, and local foods to our lunch program (and added produce snacks with our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program).
- We have increased whole grains and decreased sodium, while making sure that our food tastes great.

#### **How will our school lunch look different next year?**

##### **Our lunch trays may look a little different in the 2012-13 school year.**

- The goal over the next few years is to have all school lunch trays meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and look like USDA's MyPlate icon.
- Students will receive lunches with a balance of calories and food components that are right for their age group.
- Students will be served more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and will have a choice between fat-free and low-fat milk.

##### **School lunches will provide an even greater value with more produce.**

- School lunches will have more fruits and vegetables, with these two groups making up half the food on a tray.
- We will be offering a greater variety of brightly colored vegetables, like more dark green broccoli and more red tomatoes, than ever before.
- Every student who eats a reimbursable lunch will be required to take at least ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetable.

## **REMEMBER:**

- **Different audiences care about different things.**
- **When you speak to their concerns, they listen.**

### **For STUDENTS** (taste, doing well in school/sports):

- Our new school lunches offer the delicious nutrition you need to look and feel great – and to do well in school and sports.
- Our cafeteria will be serving you even more delicious fruits, vegetables, and whole grains than before.
- Every lunch tray in our cafeteria must include at least ½ cup total of fruits and vegetables.

### **For PARENTS** (good value, safe food, happy children):

- We serve high quality school meals that help your children be well-nourished, healthy, and ready to learn every day at school.
- Upcoming changes in school lunches continues our commitment to the best possible nutrition and food safety standards for your children, every day.
- School meals are a great value for your family – with even more fruits and vegetables than ever before.

### **For TEACHERS** (performance/behavior in classroom):

- Changes in school lunches continues our recent improvements to support students' performances in the classroom, as well as sports and other activities.
- Our school meals help children stay well-nourished so that they are better able to focus, concentrate, and succeed academically.
- New school lunch meals are planned for optimal health and safety standards, as well as to be appealing to children and adults.

### **For ADMINISTRATORS** (academic performance, budgets):

- New meal patterns will help children be well-nourished so that they are healthy and ready to learn in the classroom.
- When children are well-nourished, they are better able to focus in class and to behave better while at school.
- Compliance with the new patterns is necessary to receive reimbursement and to operate a fiscally sound school nutrition program.

### **For SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS** (academic success/recognition)

- The new school lunch patterns are one more step to help achieve our goals for healthy children who are ready to learn and succeed.
- Our school lunches are planned to help children be well-nourished, healthy, and able to concentrate in the classroom.
- These new meal patterns will help Montana schools, like ours, continue to win national awards and recognition.